

You Are My Child

Some dates on calendar so important, every year big deal: birthdays, anniversaries. Sometimes events of important day so big, cert or doc to commemorate what happened: birth cert, confirmation cert, diploma, marriage license. Official docs: say what happened on date, big deal. Another date, big deal: baptism. Receive cert; make big deal of cert. Show and tell: certificates (G-gpa, Abbie, me). What I like: trace faith down to my child. Faith – that's big deal. Really not date or cert important. Big deal about baptisms of G-gpa, me, child (and yours): God connected us to events of today's Gospel, when God said to Jesus, "You are my Son, child."

Lesson. Short; two verses. Big deal; in 4 Gospels. Mt: John tries to deter; Jesus, "fulfill all righteousness." Heard from John in Advent – prepare for Jesus. Birth at Christmas; Magi at Epiphany. Now Epiphany-1 (always mid-Jan), baptism of Jesus. Back to Jordan, see 30 yr old, in river, fulfilling righteousness, baptized.

We make big deal because God made big deal: heaven opened (Mk: "torn open"), dove (window, font), voice of Father, **"You are my Son...well pleased."** Always Son, from eternity. At baptism, when stood in water, looked like reg man, God said for all to hear: "You are Son, Savior, Messiah, one I chose to accomplish will, save world. With you pleased: finally obey will, live holy life; die on cross; rise from dead; ascend in glory. Jesus, I love you; pleased with you. I'm Father; you are my Son, my child." At baptism, Jesus began ministry as Messiah; God showed everyone: this is your Savior.

So today we remember Jesus' baptism, make big deal. No cert or date. But part of reason we make big deal of Jesus' baptism every year: today we get to look in river, at man Jesus, say this is no reg man but God, Christ, my Savior – he's one I believe in, trust. And hear Father express his love: "You are my Son, my child."

Other part of reason: takes us back to our baptism, to the day we went into water and God said about us: "You are my daughter, son, child." My cert: name, birthday, parents (I'm their son), date of baptism – 11/28/82. What makes that date important: I as baby, also enemy of God and unbeliever, went into same water where Jesus once stood and through baptism was forever connected to my Savior. Baptism connects me to Jesus. Means: what God said about Jesus, also says about me. On 11/28/82, "You are my son, whom I love." God made me child in baptism; adopted me into his family; I became sibling to Jesus, together with all believers – siblings of Jesus. All of us siblings are also heirs – so we have inheritance in heaven. Certificate says: "Child of (parents)." Real significance of my baptism is not relationship to my bio parents; but to my God. When I was baptized, God said to me, "You are my son...well pleased."

That's just me. Same true for you: when you baptized, went into same water where Jesus once stood, forever connected to Savior. Your baptism connects you to Jesus. Means: what said to Jesus, says to you. Whatever date, God said, "You are my daughter, son, child, whom I love...well pleased." Became God's child; adopted into his family; sibling to Jesus; heir of inheritance in heaven.

So make big deal out of baptism. More important than birth; rebirth! Make big deal out of date (you remember birthday); one way, candle – light of faith. Make big deal out of cert. Dig it out of files, look at it. Tangible reminder of what God did for you and when/where, record of grace in your life.

Neat to make big deal out of date and cert. Very glad I have mine, daughter's, G-gpa's cert – trace faith. Not all families have that; something I treasure. I'll put these and others on table – take a look. But even if you don't have cert or know date, that's okay. Not cert or date that's important. What's important is what happened to Jesus in Jordan and you at font. In Jordan, when baptized, Jesus went down into water to cleanse us, and God said, "I love you. You are my child." At font, when you were baptized, you went down into water, and Jesus cleansed you, and God said, "I love you. You are my daughter, son, child." So today as you see Jesus baptized, think about your own baptism, too. Make big deal out of your baptism, and thank God that through your baptism God says about you, "You are my child."

Luke 3:21-22 (NIV 2011)

²¹When all the people were being baptized, Jesus was baptized too. And as he was praying, heaven was opened ²²and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased."